

The Modern Little Red Hen

An updated -version of the well-known fable

Once upon a time, there was a little red hen who scratched about the farmyard until she uncovered some grains of wheat. She called her neighbours and said, "If we plant this wheat, we shall have bread to eat. Who will help me plant it?"

"Not I," said the cow.

"Not I," said the duck.

"Not I," said the pig.

"Not I," said the goose.

"Then I will," said the little red hen, and she did.

The wheat grew tall and ripened into golden grain.

"Who will help me reap my wheat?" asked the little red hen.

"Not I," said the duck.

"Out of my classification," said the pig.

"I'd lose seniority," said the cow.

"I'd lose my unemployment benefit," said the goose.

"Then I will," said the little red hen, and she did.

At last the time came to bake the bread.

"Who will help me bake the bread?" asked the little red hen.

"That would be overtime for me," said the cow.

"I'd lose my supplementary benefit," said the duck.

"I'm a dropout and never learned how," said the pig.

"If I'm to be the only helper, that's discrimination," said the goose.

"Then I will," said the little red hen.

She baked five loaves and held them up for her neighbours to see.

They all demanded a share. But the little red hen said, "No, I can eat the five loaves myself."

"Excess profits!" yelled the cow.

"Capitalist leech!" cried the duck.

"I demand equal rights!" shouted the goose.

The pig just grunted.

Then they painted "unfair" signs and marched round, shouting obscenities.

The government officer came and said to the little red hen, "You must not be greedy."

"But I earned the bread," said the little red hen.

"Exactly," said the officer. "That is the wonderful free enterprise system. Anyone in the farmyard can earn as much as he wants. But, under government regulations, the productive workers must divide their product with the idle."

And they lived happily ever after. But the little red hen's neighbours wondered why she never again baked bread.